

## **APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR AUTOMATED DISCOVERY AND MONITORING OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN NETWORK ELEMENTS**

### **ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION**

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A network discovery and monitoring apparatus and method of using the same. An apparatus includes an agent configured for being hosted on one of a plurality of interconnected network elements that form at least a portion of a communication network. A method includes the agent gathering application data representing a network-based application that is accessible from the network element hosting the agent. The agent monitors application traffic between each discovered application and any network element having a relationship to the application. A result of the monitoring is a relational topology, at the application layer, of the network elements in the network.

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